

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, TECH, PFOR, MNUC, JA

SUBJECT: NYE/FRI BACKGROUND BRIEFING ON NUCLEAR
REPROCESSING, APRIL 7

1. SECTIONS CONCERNING JAPAN IN THE NYE/FRI BACKGROUND
BRIEFING ON NUCLEAR REPROCESSING FOLLOW. THE TEXT IS
UNOFFICIAL AND UNCLEARED. THE EMBASSY MAY DRAW ON THIS
MATERIAL FOR BRIEFINGS WITH THE GOJ. FULL TEXT POUCHED TO
BLOOM. BEGIN QUOTE.

2. Q. RIGHT FROM THERE, CAN YOU GO INTO THE JAPANESE CASE
WHICH SEEMS TO INCLUDE ALL THE ELEMENTS THAT ARE INVOLVED
HERE BECAUSE, AS I UNDERSTAND IT, WE HAVE TO SAY "YES,"
BEFORE THE JAPANESE CAN GO CRITICAL WITH THEIR BIGGER
REACTOR, IS THAT RIGHT, THE PILOT --
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3. MR. FRI: NOT QUITE. THE JAPANESE HAVE A REPROCES-
SING PLANT WHICH HAS NOT YET GONE HOT AT TOKAI-MURA, AND
THERE IS IN THE AGREEMENTS FOR COOPERATION A NEED FOR THE
UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TO MAKE A LEGAL FINDING OF THE
SAFEGUARDABILITY OF THE TOKAI-MORA PLANT BEFORE AMERICAN-
DERIVED, SPENT FUEL CAN BE REPROCESSED AT THE TOKAI-MURA

PLANT. THAT'S NOT THE SAME THING AS SAYING THAT WE HAVE A VETO ON THEIR BREEDER PROGRAM. WE DO NOT.

4. Q. I WOULD LIKE TO FOLLOW UP THAT QUESTION BECAUSE THE PRESIDENT, IN HIS REMARKS THIS MORNING, LISTED A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES WHICH DO HAVE REPROCESSING CAPABILITIES WHICH WE WOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH, AND HE INCLUDED JAPAN IN THAT LIST OF COUNTRIES, AS I RECALL. WAS THAT JUST A "SLIP OF THE TONGUE" ON HIS PART?

5. MR. FRI: WELL, WE ARE CURRENTLY ENGAGED IN CONSULTATIONS WITH THE JAPANESE. THERE IS A JAPANESE MISSION HERE WHICH IS DISCUSSING THE QUESTIONS OF THE TOKAI-MURA PLANT AS WELL AS A NUMBER OF OTHER QUESTIONS OF NUCLEAR ENERGY WHICH WE HAVE IN COMMON WITH JAPAN, QUESTIONS OF HOW WE CAN ORGANIZE NUCLEAR ENERGY PROGRAMS WITH BOTH OUR COUNTRIES SO THAT WE BOTH ARE ABLE TO PROFIT FROM THE BENEFITS OF NUCLEAR ENERGY WITHOUT REDUCING THE SECURITY OF EITHER OF OUR COUNTRIES. SO, I DON'T THINK THE PRESIDENT WANTED AT THIS TIME TO SAY THE DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN, BECAUSE WE HAVE ONGOING CONSULTATIONS. AS YOU ARE AWARE, HE DISCUSSED THIS WITH PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA; THE JAPANESE SENT A VERY ABLE MISSION HERE; THERE ARE MORE PEOPLE COMING FROM TOKYO FOR FURTHER CONSULTATIONS NEXT WEEK, SO I THINK THAT THAT IS THE SPIRIT IN WHICH IT SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD.

6. Q. I RECALL THAT PRESIDENT CARTER SAID AT THIS MORNING'S PRESS CONFERENCE THAT JAPAN AND OTHERS HAVE A PERFECT RIGHT TO CONTINUE AND GO AHEAD WITH THE REPROCESSING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EFFORT. AND AT THIS BRIEFING YOU MENTIONED HERE AS FAR AS THE JAPANESE CASE IS CONCERNED, THERE IS A PENDING PROGRAM OR QUESTION OF THE SAFEGUARD. DOES IT MEAN THAT ALTHOUGH THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT HAS A PERFECT RIGHT, BUT THEY MAY NOT BE PERMITTED TO GO AHEAD WITH THE REPROCESSING PLANT?

7. MR. NYE: LET ME MAKE SURE THERE IS NO INDICATION OF ANY IDEA OF DISCRIMINATION TOWARDS JAPAN ON THIS. JAPAN IS AN IMPORTANT ALLY OF THE UNITED STATES, AND FULLY CO-EQUAL WITH ALL OTHER COUNTRIES.

8. THE PARTICULAR CASE IN JAPAN ARISES FROM A BINDING INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT, FREELY SIGNED BY THE TWO GOVERNMENTS, THAT THE UNITED STATES SUPPLY FUEL TO BE REPROCESSED IN JAPAN, WOULD REQUIRE A U.S. FINDING OF THE SAFEGUARDABILITY OF THE REPROCESSING PLANT, SO THIS IS A LITTLE BIT DIFFERENT THAN SAYING EVERYONE HAS A PERFECT RIGHT TO DO WHICH IS WITHIN THEIR OWN JURISDICTION. AND OF COURSE, THEY DO. BUT UNDER THE SOVEREIGN RIGHTS OF NATIONS, WHEN

THEY SIGN AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT, THAT SAYS THAT ANOTHER COUNTRY CAN MAKE ITS FINDING OF SAFEGUARDABILITY, TO FIND THAT THAT IS A RESTRICTION IS NOT INCOMMENSURATE WITH CO-EQUAL STATUS, OR SOVEREIGN STATUS.

9. DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE POINT I AM MAKING THAT IN THIS CASE, THERE IS AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT WHICH JAPAN AGREED TO, WHICH SAID THERE WOULD BE A FINDING OF SAFEGUARDABILITY ON AMERICAN-SUPPLIED FUEL GOING THROUGH THE TOKAI PLANT. SO THAT IS WHY IT MIGHT APPEAR THAT THERE IS AN INCONSISTENCY, BUT THERE IN FACT IS NOT AN INCONSISTENCY.

10. Q. TO FOLLOW THAT UP, REGARDLESS OF THE EXISTENCE OF THE AGREEMENT, WHICH MAKES IT CLEARLY A SPECIAL CASE, THE PRESIDENT APPEARED TO IMPLY THIS MORNING THAT JAPAN, AMONG OTHER NATIONS, HAD--I FORGET HIS EXACT WORDS, BUT--HAD A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RIGHT TO GO FORWARD OR COULD GO FORWARD WITH A REPROCESSING PLANT.

11. I GATHER FROM WHAT YOU HAVE SAID THAT THAT IS NOT A SETTLED ISSUE, THAT THE UNITED STATES MIGHT STILL LIKE TO PERSUADE JAPAN NOT TO EXERCISE THAT RIGHT. IS THAT A CORRECT INTERPRETATION?

12. MR. NYE: WELL, I THINK THAT THE PROPER INTERPRETATION IS THAT THIS IS A MATTER WE'RE DISCUSSING WITH THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT RIGHT NOW. WHEN PRESIDENT CARTER AND PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA DISCUSSED THIS ISSUE AT THEIR MEETING THEY AGREED UPON SETTING UP A CONSULTATIVE GROUP THAT WOULD INVESTIGATE A VARIETY OF WAYS IN WHICH THE JAPANESE AND AMERICAN NUCLEAR PROGRAMS MIGHT BE BROUGHT INTO SOME FORM OF HARMONY OR COMMON PERSPECTIVE, AND AMONG THOSE QUESTIONS IS THE POSSIBLE USE OF THE TOKAI PLANT. BUT THE QUESTION OF MAKING AN IMMEDIATE FINDING OF SAFEGUARDABILITY FOR CONVENTIONAL REPROCESSING AT TOKAI, I DON'T THINK THE PRESIDENT MEANT TO SAY THAT HE HAD AGREED TO THAT AT THIS TIME. OTHERWISE, WHY WOULD THERE BE A VERY IMPORTANT JAPANESE CONSULTATIVE GROUP HERE AND MORE COMING, I BELIEVE, TOMORROW.

13. Q. YES. THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT WANTS TO START THE OPERATION OF THE REPROCESSING PLANT IN JULY. DO YOU THINK THAT YOU CAN RESOLVE THE NECESSARY PROCESSING PROBLEMS BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS BY THAT TIME LIMIT?

14. MR. NYE: I THINK THAT THE CHANCES OF FINDING A MEETING OF THE MINDS BETWEEN THE JAPANESE AND AMERICAN GOVERN-

MENTS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY AND HOW TO ORGAN-
IZE OUR NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLES IN WAYS IN WHICH WE BOTH HAVE
ENERGY AND SECURITY IS SOMETHING WHICH IS SOLUBLE, AND I
THINK THE PARTICULAR POINT OF HOW THE TOKAI-MURA PLANT
WILL FIT WITHIN THAT LARGER PERSPECTIVE IS ONE IN WHICH
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WE HAVE TO AWAIT THE OUTCOME OF THE ONGOING CONSULTATIONS.

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